

REMARKS

In the Office Action the Examiner has rejected claims 2-4 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Cheng et al. (U.S. Pat. No. 6,577,421). Further, claims 5-13 have been objected to as being dependant upon a rejected base claim. The Examiner, however, has indicated that claims 5-13 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form, including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

In response, independent claim 2 has been amended to now include all of the limitations of dependent claim 5. The Examiner has indicated that such a claim would be allowable. Accordingly, claim 5, which originally set forth the limitations now included in claim 2, has been cancelled, and claim 6 has been amended to depend from a still pending claim. Amendments to the claims have been made to place this application into condition for allowance. Claims 2-4 and 6-13 remain pending.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)

In the Office Action, claims 2-4 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) for being unpatentable over Cheng et al. (U.S. Pat. No. 6,577,421). Also, claims 5-13 have been objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim. The Examiner, however, has indicated that claims 5-13 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form, including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

In response to the Office Action, independent claim 2 has been amended to include all of the limitations of dependent claim 5. With this amendment, independent

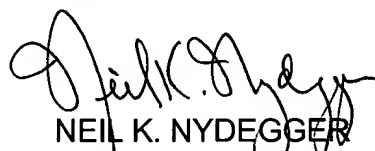
claim 2 now contains subject matter that the Examiner has indicated is allowable. Accordingly, Attorney for Applicant respectfully contends that independent claim 2, as amended, is not unpatentable over Cheng et al. Since claims 3, 4, and 6-13 depend directly or indirectly from amended claim 2, these claims are also allowable.

For the reasons set forth above, Attorney for Applicant contends the basis for rejecting claims 2-4 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) has been overcome and should be withdrawn.

In conclusion, Applicant respectfully asserts that claims 2-4 and 6-13 are patentable for the reasons set forth above, and that the application is now in a condition for allowance. Accordingly, an early notice of allowance is respectfully requested. The Examiner is requested to call the undersigned at 619-688-1300 for any reason that would advance the instant application to issue.

Dated this 16th day of December, 2004.

Respectfully submitted,


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